

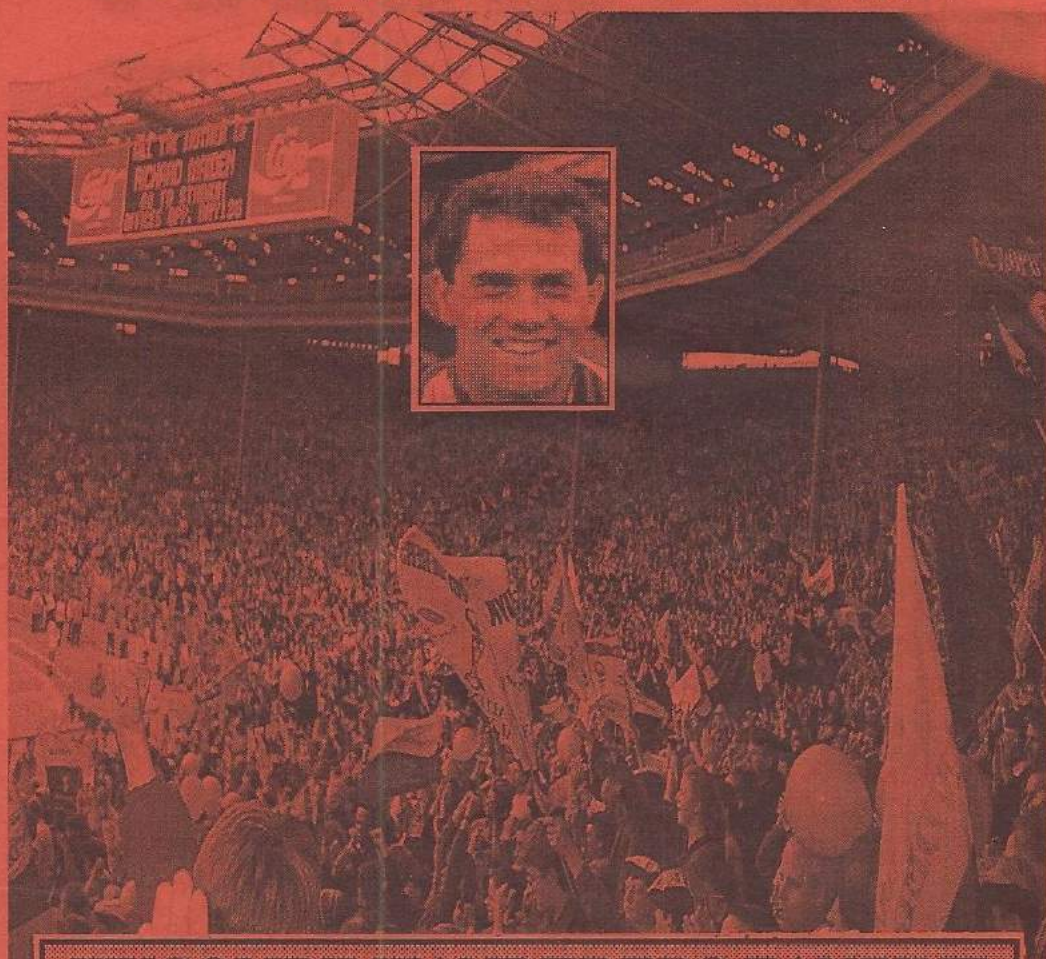
THE ADAMS FAMILY



April 93.....

Issue 7..... Still only 50p.....

HE'S BACK, FOR WEMBLEY GLORY?



WYCOMBE WANDERERS FANZINE

THE ADAMS FAMILY

**P.O. BOX 394 HIGH WYCOMBE
BUCKS HP13 6HT**

WELCOME to this our 7th issue. As you will find it is packed with satirical and intellectual ramblings about our beloved team, and yes, we still have the Westy video to be won.

We have reached a critical stage of the season with a ridiculously packed schedule in April that stinks of the rest of the Conference chairmen ganging-up to prevent Wycombe's promotion by refusing to allow the season to extend past 2nd May.

A terrific win against Sl**gh (see elsewhere in this issue for views on this memorable night) has given us some breathing space but we cannot afford to become complacent.

Thanks for producing a measly 50p for this tome. Back issues are still on sale at the side-splitting price of only 30p. Edition 8 will be on sale before the home fixture against Macclesfield on the last day of the season. If we do make it to Wembley (let's all keep our fingers crossed that we do) you should be able to pick up a copy at Wycombe train station on the morning of the Final.

Don't be afraid to send in your articles, after all, people don't want to just hear our views all the time.

ALL PHOTOS COURTESY OF BUCKS FREE PRESS

Contributors; Doug Peters, Jon Dickinson, Mark Van Walwyk, Stuart Murphy, Neil Peters, Heather Carr, Andy Dickinson, Paul Van Walwyk.

Thanks to Jim Melvin for his time.

Thanks To; Floyd...Corporate Marketing
Emma....Circulation Manager
The Rave.....Northern Vibes

Outlets; Our address (50p+SAE), Wycombe Wines (The Adams Family goes down better with a beer!), and Sportspages, Charring X Road, London.

TERRACE TATTLE

"Anton Vircavs, you're having a laugh aren't you?", is the polite way of quoting my reaction when I heard that the man, who walked out on Wycombe some six years ago to further his career with Cheltenham, had re-signed for four grand. I was, to quote a term rarely used in football, gutted, and professed to colleagues at work that it was the most tragic happening in Martin O'Neill's time at WWFC. What a pillock I therefore looked when Anton held the back line together, after Andy Kerr's laughable sending off, and continued where he left off, at Dagenham, where Mary Nuttall and his teammates were confounded by Anton's rock like presence. Well played matey, keep it up.

Whilst on the subject of the D & R game, it is worth paying tribute to the return of "Local Hero" and top man of Wycombe Mark

West. Anyone who witnessed his Lazarus like revival, cannot deny this was the Westie of

1990/91 season. A coolly taken penalty and his trademark, a six yard toe poke sent, the travelling

fans wild, with chants of "Westie" ringing around the ground. All the flicks started coming off and you could see the confidence flowing back into the great mans boots. Yes Westie is back, he's had almost two years break, and is refreshed, for Wembley glory!! As a matter of interest, any Wycombe fans travelling home who



**Anton
Vircavs**

noticed a car engulfed in flames on the M40, spare a thought for myself, it's driver, and the victim of the child-lock sat in the back, as we didn't get home until 2 AM. The car was the property of a certain TAF scribe Neil Peters, and maybe your 50p will help secure a fire extinguisher for his new car.

Of course until these last two results things were getting a bit close, and I was really starting to worry after the farce at Yeovil.

After a bright and promising first half I settled in for the 2nd half with a "win would be nice, but a draw will do" frame of mind. Forty five minutes later the frame of mind was, shall we say, rather less than tranquil. We had been totally ripped open by a team containing Phil Ferns, a distressing thought if ever there was one! By the way I wouldn't bother buying the dismal "TeamTalk" magazine as it's editor/publisher Tony Williams is a Yeovil director, so there's bound to be a lot of smugness in it. Add to that the fact that "TeamTalk" is so jealous of our success, and never features us, I wouldn't ever bother buying it again. Why not give the new "Non League Football Today" a go, the current issue has a feature on the Blues, and it's cheaper.

Another highlight of the last month was the trophy Q/F against Gateshead. Adams park has only once before experienced such resignation turning to a riot of joy, and that was when King/Judas (delete as applicable) Nick Evans scored his last minute equaliser against Trowbridge, and scored again to claim victory in this FA Cup tie.

You see the best thing about last minute goals is they're always missed by the sadcases who leave ten minutes early to, "Beat the traffic" or, "Get home for Baywatch". Why do they do it? I bet some of them left early to beat the traffic when we won the trophy! Football is a 90 minute game, try sticking it out, you might like it.

Some of you may already be aware, thanks to

Mr. Goldsworthy's programme notes, that most of our writing team took a mid-season break at a Butlins "comedy" (and I use the word very loosely) weekend, instead of going to Northwich. But what has this to do with WWFC I hear you ask, well let me explain. On the bill at this festival was none other than Crackerjack star of the past, and runner of London marathon's dressed as an Ostrich, Bernie Clifton. After his set we bumped into the great man at the bar, who promptly pointed at my mates Wycombe shirt and exclaimed, "Wycombe Wanderers, the conference is yours." Agog at this statement we chatted further and discovered that Bernie had been to see Yeovil in the past with his showbiz pal, former Yeovil director and sad comic Richard Digance (also on the Butlins bill). The evening ended rather surreally with six of us sat round a table with Bernie and Dickie talking non-league football! Bernie graciously tipped us for the title, but Richard claimed Yeovil would pip us at the last, a statement that was a good deal funnier than any of the gags in his chronic set.

The next time this column appears in print the Drinkwise will have been decided, so will the Conference unless it goes to the wire, and the trophy finalists will be known. If we're lucky we could succeed in all three of these aims, unlucky, and we could fail them all. The league is the priority and none of us must forget this. Wembley is a great day out, and I'd love to experience it again, but not at the expense of the title.

If you like the title is the country mansion, the trophy is the flash car, and the Drinkwise is the tacky stone cladding northerners have round their houses. So lets keep our heads for this insane run in, get behind ANYONE who wears the quartered shirts and glory will be ours.

==Dragon Slayers==



ENGLAND HEROES

Along with many other Wanderers supporters, I made the trip to Cheltenham Town's Whaddon Road ground to see the momentous occasion when four of our finest players made their England debuts in the semi-pro friendly international against Wales. Much has already been written about the match, so I'll just raise a few points.

Firstly, why on earth did Tony Jennings hand the job of goalkeeper to the woeful Ryan Price of Stafford Rangers, who was totally at fault for the Welsh goal, and performed nervously all night. Secondly why did England play two registered midgets up front, when surely our own Keith Scott would have provided a much needed extra option. Thirdly, what a shame it was that a section of the Welsh support still hadn't come to grips with the fact that Britain is now, and has been for some time, a multi-cultural society. Police take note, you can legally throw these racist pratts out of the ground, so why not actually start doing it, its the only way they'll learn. Racism is far more sinister than the odd crude chant, so get your priorities right.

That said our quartet shone throughout, especially Steve Thompson, the obvious man-of-the-match. Congratulations once again boys, and Mr Jennings, why didn't it happen sooner????

DIRTY DENNIS, crude blue

Dennis Greene made his debut as a stand-up comic at the UP THE CREEK comedy club in Greenwich on 21/02/1993. We heard a rumour about the gig the night before and so we found ourselves travelling to South London the next evening to see if his stand-up routine was as funny as his goal-scoring record this season. Forget the pale claims of other journals, T.A.F. was the only publication at this momentous occasion.

We were told to be at the club by 8:30. We arrived at about 8:45. It was quite a seedy looking venue and when there was still no sign of Dennis or our reliable informant who was travelling down with him at 9:30 we started thinking that we were the victims of a wind up.

Eventually Dennis and his entourage did turn up and we were told that he would be on at about 10:30. There were three acts on before him, none of which got a very warm reception from the 300 strong crowd. The evening was hosted by the most witless old beer head I have ever had the misfortune to witness. Dennis was the second of two guest slots. The first guest didn't so much get heckled as abused off the stage, and this was his 71st gig. It was at this point that Dennis started to fill his pants!

His act started badly enough with the compere forgetting his name. However once he got started he showed that he has real promise as a stand-up comedian. His gags came thick and fast delivered with a great sense of comic timing, which didn't give the extremely hostile audience a chance to heckle him. The crowd were just warming to him when he came out with a certain rather unnecessary gag which caused most of the crowd to boo and hiss. Luckily the rest of his ten minute set bought nothing but laughter and much slapping of thighs. When he finished he received a round of applause which was only bettered by the headline act. He had survived a particularly strong test performing his debut in front of a crowd which are supposedly notorious for their bad heckling. Malcolm, the drunken host, seemed to be the

only person in the venue who didn't enjoy it accusing Dennis of being Jim Davidson .We later found out that none of the material was original.

Unfortunately, due to the fact that this fanzine is read by people under the age of 18, we are unable to reproduce any of Dennis' gags. In fact his jokes were the crudest gags I've ever heard, some of them would make a sailor blush. Those of you which didn't get to see this fine performance (which is probably all of you) needn't despair as Steve "God" Guppy videod the set. This was obviously so that the club could sell copies in the Corner Flag (either that or Guppy was hoping that a heckler might catch Dennis with a bottle and thus win some money from Jeremy Beadle).

Dennis may not yet be in the same league as Baddiel and Newman or Dennis Leary (or Barnet and Cardiff) but he is well worth seeing.

Catch him at a club near you!!!

UP *the* CREEK

'The BEST CABARET CLUB IN LONDON'
- TIME OUT



Dennis on stage

SAVE OUR STANDING



The Woodland Terrace; Bucket seats, no thanks.

As we reach the final arduous run in to the season it is difficult to think of anything else but the next match. With so many games to play in so few weeks the outcome of the conference is still uncertain. However should Wycombe, as expected, win the Conference, one of the evils of football in the 1990's could rear its unwelcome head.

What I am talking about is seating on the beloved Woodland Terrace.

As we all know, in the football league the Woodland will need either seats or crash barriers to pass criteria specified in the Taylor report. We can also safely assume that any decision on this situation will need to be made swiftly after promotion is reached i.e. in the close season. For this reason the Adams Family has decided to raise the profile of this most contentious issue.

OUR STAND

THE ADAMS FAMILY is wholly opposed to any new seating at the expense of existing terrace space at Adams Park. We do not mind extra seats if they are built in addition to the current ground but not on the existing terrace. The main reason for this is capacity at the ground. Even though putting seats in the Woodland would not reduce current capacity, it certainly would not increase it, such as the instalment of crash barriers would and lets face it with the crowds Wycombe are building up these days we need expansion rather than restriction.

The vast majority of Wycombe fans enjoy viewing the match standing, many of those on the Woodland Terrace. The action is easy to see all over the pitch and there is a generally more savoury atmosphere than the Valley end, whilst still retaining an atmosphere unlike the Hillbottom end.

All of us who enjoy watching Wycombe whilst standing must prepare ourselves for any announcement on seating in the Woodland and if it happens we must be ready to respond. Failure to do so could see this fine terrace mutating into a bucket seat nightmare.

WHAT DO YOU THINK?

Have you any views on this subject? If you agree with us wear a pink vest to every game for the rest of the season. Alternatively you could just write to us and register your opinion in advance, after all prevention is better than a cure. One thing is for sure, football clubs in the nineties love seats, and apathy amongst terrace supporters will bring them to Adams Park. That said if you feel Wycombe need more seats we would still like to hear from you.

LIFE OF RYAN



★★★★★★★★★★

★★★★★★★★★★

★★★★★★★★★★

★★★★★★★★★★

Most clubs fans, at one time or the other, find one member of their team to jeer and laugh at. The past two seasons have found Keith Ryan in this role. I admit in the past a few small digs have been handed out even in this fine mag, although none of them to the ludicrous proportions dished out by a one time rival fanzine. Even so, Right on time "the boy came good", and Keith Ryan is surely playing the best football of his career to date. Not only has he been playing well, but I, and other fans have actually agreed he deserved "man of the match" on more than one occasion.

His recent form has shown his versatility for playing his more common role in central midfield as well as putting in fine performances in both left and right back. I must admit to cringing in the past at team announcements that carried the name Keith Ryan, whereas now a team without Ryan is the one to cringe about. He has found the strength to run with the ball through players and then lay on the perfect pass, in the same style Stapes did in the early part of this season. At present Keith is fit, fast and playing exciting football. He deserves at last, to have an article written about him. Having said that this is not out of sympathy or because he's due a feature, it's been earned by a player whose game has improved tenfold, just when he was really needed. GOOD ON YOU SIR, KEEP IT UP.

★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★

From BLUE to GREEN (residents reply)

Being even-handed at the Adams Family, we have decided to see the other side of the argument regarding the training pitch. Maybe the local residents have some good ideas and if the club agree, some compromise can be reached. Global harmony could once again be restored. As the training pitch is going ahead we asked some of the local residents to draw up some guidelines for a training pitch they could all live with. These are a few of the more reasonable proposals.

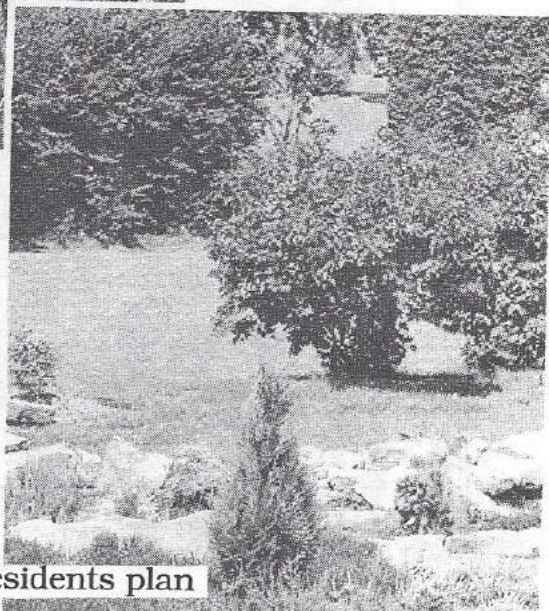
- 1) As floodlights would be a total eyesore, fans should turn up with torches and shine them on the players as they train.
- 2) So not to degrade the local countryside, the pitch should have small shrubs and bushes intermittently spread on it, as this would blend in with the field behind.
- 3) The goals themselves should be painted green and covered in ivy, so they don't stick out.
- 4) When in use, players on the training pitch should refrain from shouting at each other as some people will be trying to watch television. Instead a restrained whisper or some system of sign language could be employed.
- 5) As twenty plus men running around in bright blue clothing will hardly blend in, we suggest a trip to the army surplus to get a camouflage kit for all concerned.
- 6) When not in use, horses and cows could be left to graze. This would make for a truly rural scene. (also rounding them up would be good training in itself.)
- 7) Access for local residents to let their dogs run lose and crap everywhere would be a good show of community spirit.

8) White linings could be replaced by thin borders of wild flowers, we suggest snowdrops, despite their seasonal limitations.

Hopefully the club could consider these fine proposals and restore the faith of the local community. Maybe some of the local residents could even be tempted down on a Saturday afternoon.



Paul Hyde inspects
the goalmouth



Artists impression of the residents plan

REBELS WITHOUT A POINT

TUES MARCH 23rd

WW 1 SLOUGH T 0

ATTENDANCE 7,200 inside, 600 outside

Well those figures say it all. If you were there you will know what I mean, if you weren't HA HA HA. The game that evening was probably the most important Wycombe have ever played. If Slough had won, the feeling they would've carried to the Wexham Park fixture could have been crippling. Yet our "boys in blue" fought a very hard and exciting game. Scotty and Stapes injured, Kerr sent off and two new additions to the side. To have known these facts before the kick-off, how would you have rated our chances of a victory? I am writing this twenty four hours after the



TOWN SLOUGH'S FOR TOWN BALL

SLough

biggest crowd of the season saw Wycombe play football against a team only content on playing the long ball, and kicking our boys off the park.

The whole team played out of their skins. New signing Langford was inspirational up front, Ryan a solid contributor, and double act Hyde and Cousins - a brick wall. The sheer volume of noise from the crowd was electric, and the enthusiasm on the bench was energetic to say the least. The refereeing was, surprise surprise, abysmal. Speaking of which, I found the sending off of Andy Kerr ridiculous. In highly charged affairs such as these, referees must learn to use discretion, and I remain convinced that no malicious intent was to be found in the incident. However, despite this, the biggest test of the season had been successfully completed.

As I write the away fixture is still to be played, but I believe that as the teams have already met, the pressure will not be so great. I just hope that by the time you read this the point difference will show that being top of the league means you can beat everybody, hopefully twice!

20 CRENDON STREET,
HIGH WYCOMBE
BUCKINGHAMSHIRE
HP13 6LS

Telephone:
0494 437228



DRAUGHT REAL ALES SELECTION OF OVER 200 WINES

Mon-Sat 10 to 10 Sun 12 to 2 and 7 to 10

WYCOMBE WINES also sell THE ADAMS FAMILY,
apart from mail order the only other way
to pick up a copy of this fine fanzine.

WE'VE BEEN MELVINED

Imagine my surprise when I picked up the phone shortly after the release of issue six, to be confronted with "Hello, this is Jim Melvin from Wycombe Wanderers". Jim Melvin, what did he want from me? Had he seen me playing in the park on a Sunday afternoon? Or was it merely one of my mates phoning for a laugh. No, it was Big Jim alright, but what was he after. Well apparently he felt that my comments in the last issue regarding the Youth Team were unfair, and he simply wanted us to come down and iron out a few details. This sounded fair enough to me, so we arranged to meet that very night, where the boys were in action against a team from Woking. Now if you cast your minds back to the last issue (with the tacky swan on the cover) you will remember me questioning the whole Youth set-up, rather naively I must add, purely on one performance at Flackwell Heath. I must confess to feeling an even greater pratt when I found out that the majority of the players that night were trialists.

Still onto the game, and I have to say that the boys looked very classy indeed. Slick passing movements, a lively front line, and a defence tighter than a "ducks ass" saw our youngsters pull off a comprehensive victory. Players that are worth watching out for are Peter Law, a player who runs strongly into goalscoring positions, and Chris Gell, also an attacking player with style and flair. One thing that really struck me was the level of strength and fitness in the players, which is according to Jim, a result of weekly weight training in the WWFC gym. He stressed that a good fitness regime was important at this early age, as it got players into good habits.

Speaking to Jim is quite an experience, as his

love for football comes across very clearly. He is very much one of these men who seemingly "live for the game" and you only have to watch him and Martin in the dug-outs to see the passion that flows through such men. I wouldn't be at all surprised to see him going onto to greater things in the coming years, perhaps with Wycombe. The Youth Team he manages play the same system as the Firsts, the two wide men pushing forward to aid the strikers, and the result is quite impressive viewing, we're not talking cubs football here.

Another aspect of the Youth Team that I questioned was the selection policy. Despite there only being six lads from the Wycombe area in the current line up, I am informed that there are schemes within the community that encourage the youth of Wycombe to have the chance of becoming the next "Westy". Also the club advertises in a number of local papers in the close season, where the bulk of the youth squad is thus assembled.

Now I know it's been said many times before that football clubs are, on the whole, an un-cooperative bunch, but Jim was truly a gentleman and a scholar, and not at all the psyched-up, unhinged loony I thought he could well be. So if you ever get a spare evening when the young lads are in action, go check them out. You may well be seeing the "stars of tomorrow in action today".

With Little Help From His Friends

What has happened to Wycombe's strikers? Last season Scotty was nothing short of cack until march when he suddenly burst into life. We have criticized him before but this season the man has been a revelation. Up until about mid February he hadn't gone more than one game without finding the net. As I write this he has failed to score for five games but I am sure this is only a temporary lapse in his season. He is still playing as if his life depended on it. I believe that one reason for his stunning form

is he has been told by the club that they will stop serving Guinness behind the bar unless he nets 35 goals, then again maybe he just wants us to look stupid for taking the lash out of him last season. However we cannot rely on Scotty alone. What of his "goal-scoring" colleagues?

Two seasons ago Mark West was a footballing genius. A quick brain and great close control made up for his lack of speed and he was devastating in the box. He was outstanding in the 1990/91 season and who can forget his winner at Wembley? He was justifiably voted Conference Player Of The Year that season but what has gone wrong? Last season he started well but injuries and abysmal form have left him out of the squad until recently. On the few occasions that he has played he has looked slow, uninterested and at times down right lazy. I would dearly love to see him back alongside Scotty as they can be a deadly pairing but he doesn't seem to want it enough himself. I just didn't know what is wrong with him. Maybe the magic was all in his tash. Go on Westy, grow it back we need you.

Dennis Greene had a great start as a Wycombe player when he joined last season. Scoring on his debut, four goals against Altrincham and a brilliant curler against Boston. This season he seems to have lost it. He just doesn't look like scoring. He could have had a hat-trick away to Woking but he was a little unlucky there. Anyone who went to Dagenham & Redbridge to see the second Drinkwise cup semi-final would have seen him guilty of a miss of Ronnie Rosenthal proportions. Maybe he just needs one goal to get him going but I am starting to doubt even that. His work rate is excellent but maybe if he slowed down a bit he might give himself more of a chance to score. Come on Dennis we know you can do it.

Uncle Kim Casey started the season well enough and was unlucky to miss about three months after being injured against West Brom. Since his return he has, to be fair, not looked totally match fit, but he seems to have lost his bottle. I think the answer to his problems is to wear his lucky stripy pants which were witnessed away to Macclesfield on the opening day the season.

The midfield seem to be scoring less goals at the moment so if the goals do dry up for Scotty (which I sincerely hope they do not) we could be in real trouble.

With the arrival of Tim Langford we may have the solution to our problems. Let's hope he links up quickly with Scotty to make the most awesome partnership in Non-League football.



ON THE BUSES

I often wonder; When players are sat on their luxury team coach playing cards, smoking cigars, or doing whatever keeps them amused, do they ever pause to spare a thought for the away traveller? The hardcore supporter, who through rough and smooth will shell out hard-earned cash to follow his heroes around "dear old blighty".

Away travel is an experience which can be at times exhilarating, and at other times downright depressing. Obviously depending on the scoreline, but also, I've found on the mode of transport that you chose to take. In recent years I've found the car to be the only way to travel, purely as a cost-cutting measure, not forgetting the simple convenience that it gives you. However there didn't used to be a choice. As a young lad, a Saturday afternoon gave you the option of either watching the Blues or staying in and

vegetating in front of Grandstand/ World of Sport. Of course away games meant only one thing.....the dreaded coach! Nine times out of ten I managed to scrounge the fare off my folks and make the trek down to Lily's Walk, where I would mingle with various celebrities and wait for the coach to arrive. 50% of the time it was late and often the witty chorus of "why are we waiting?" would surface from grown men who should have known better. But when the coach did arrive all hell broke lose. Me and my chums would make a bundle for the back seat (do school kids still do this?) only to be hounded out by a certain greasy, so-called "superfan", who in his broadest Bucks accent would (close to tears) yell, "Oi, that's moi seat", and obviously we would have to move. Actually the back seat was never all it was cracked up to be. The one time I did secure it I'd just bought the new Julian Cope cassette only for some Neanderthal to nick it and chew it up in his Pony "Grundig walkman". Hardly a crying shame you may think, but this game happened to be Bognor '87 (see issue 6), so although I returned happy at winning the League, the loss of my tape together with my urine soaked clothing somewhat dampened the spirits.

Still on the subject of coaches, why was beer banned? It never seemed to stop most passengers having litres of the stuff. I'll never forget my first trip to Yeovil. One man, who I still see is a regular Blues fan, decided to have a few beers with his equally ambitious friend. A few beers meant literally about twenty cans of Carlsberg Special "Tramps" Brew, and more worrying was the fact that the beer had been consumed by the time Stonehenge came into view. "'Ere driver I need a waz" shouted one of the less than intellectual gents, and the driver, obviously not wishing his coach to resemble a car park staircase, promptly stopped... Stonehenge loomed on the horizon. One of the lads got out to answer the call of nature,

while the other man cowered back to his seat, fear frozen onto his ever dulling features. "No no I can't get out here..... this place is full of evil spirits", he screamed. Needless to say come Yeovil, a rather large stain could be viewed on his faded Oxfam trousers. Also needless to say I was rarely seen on the coaches again. However I'm not saying that you shouldn't sample this fine tradition, as it certainly taught me much about life and it's many characters.

So if we have any readers out there who actually board the coach and enjoy the experience, we would like to hear your views. Has this primitive means of transport improved over the last few years? Or is it still reminiscent of how I can only remember it - a colostomy bag on wheels?!

~~~~~**LETTERS**~~~~~

Dear T.A.F.

Congratulations on an excellent magazine. I am writing in response to the letter you published from Martin Norriss in the last issue regarding making the Woodlands all seater. I can't agree with this, for the following reasons:

- 1, Putting seats in would further reduce an already too small ground capacity.
- 2, The club will, no doubt, charge more for the "privilege" of sitting down.
- 3, Most people prefer to stand. At most home games there are spare seats in the stand, which means roughly only a quarter of the crowd wanted to sit.
- 4, If you've ever been to a match in an all seater stadium, you will know that when anything exciting happens everyone stands up anyway.

5, For a lot of people standing up is simply more fun. You can choose your vantage point, jump around etc.

6, Mr Norriss states that going all seater is the only way forward for the club. Why? Did Liverpool achieve their long reign as kings of Europe by making their fans sit?

The only way more seats should be put in is by extending the ground, not by converting the existing facilities.

Yours,

Darren Thelwell.

Widmer End.

THE WYCOMBE



Righters of wrong, Guardians of the goal and purveyors of fine football. Hyde and Cousins' Valiant crusade against the evil of opposing teams. See how they hold their own against astonishing odds, the safest hands and the hardest boots. Take them on at your own risk! Appearing soon at a football game near you.

BACK TO BACK

In my 8 or so years of supporting the mighty WWFC, there have been many players, all varied in skill, playing the full back role, and gracing (or disgracing) the blue shirt.

The right back spot has never truly posed any problems. The late 80's provided us with masters such as Kirk Corbin and Steve Abbley, and more recently we've been treated to perhaps the finest of them all, the swashbuckling crowd-pleaser Jason Cousins.

But in perverse comparison the opposing left back position has been a continual problem in recent seasons with no less than ten players trying out the role in the last two years. It wasn't always this way. The mid-eighties gave us Mark Hill, the white man with the "Westy" style afro. Then there was balding fatty Neil Price and lastly the man who many saw as the last great left back Sean Norman. From here on we have had problems. The current first teamers Simon Stapleton and Sir Matt Crossley have always performed admirably in the vacant position when called upon, but both will no doubt admit to being more comfortable elsewhere, while alas the days of cult hero Steve "Wally" Walford seem to be sadly over.

But the bulk of our left backs in recent seasons have been loan players. Now maybe I'm being sceptical, but I'm always somewhat anxious about these men. I always wonder if the player is entirely happy to play in non-league football when he has a lush contract with, say, Nottingham Forest i.e. Stuart Cash. I always get the feeling that the player is never 100% committed.

The first of the loan men was the aforementioned Cash, a skillful naturally left footed defender who seemed to be the answer to our prayers. However, despite seemingly loving every minute of the Trophy build up, the ungrateful sod cleared off to Chesterfield, his trophy medal no doubt

sprucing up his bare cabinet. The following season provided us with fellow loan left backs Geoff Cooper and Pete Johnson, from Barnet and Peterborough respectively. Geoff never really got too involved and seemed to fancy himself more so in Steve Guppy's role, while Pete, despite flashes of brilliance, had the sort of haircut that, as we well know, never bodes well for a career with Wycombe. Both disappeared without trace and no one lost any sleep. Neither were we reaching for the scalpels when Gavin Covington returned to Hitchin Town, as the much touted youngster seemed to be permanently knackered throughout his ill-fated spell.

All this brings us to our latest, and dare I say greatest, left back Les Thompson. Any man who cuts his head open on his debut and sees out the full ninety minutes deserves full credit, and I believe Les could be the man to see us climbing up the Barclays League Division Three. However, should Les return to Burnley before, or at the end of the season, don't be surprised to see another candidate out to claim the number three shirt. Keith Ryan played a storming game in the epic derby clash against Slough, and if Mr 100% can keep up the form he's shown in recent matches, who knows? Maybe our problems will be solved.